and sandy areas; and

(b) if so, the details and the reaction and the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI S.B.P.B.K. SATYANARAYANA RAO): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Intervention of Central Government was sought to reclaim 25,000 ha. of acidic soils at a cost of Rs. 5 crores and 24,000 ha. of saline including coastal saline and sandy areas at a cost of Rs. 60 crores during 9th Five Year Plan. The Ministry's proposal for inclusion of a scheme for amelioration of acid soils in the country was not approved by the Planning Commission and hence no financial assistance could be provided to Karnataka State under the Scheme. As regards the Scheme of Reclamation of Saline including Coastal Saline and Sandy Areas, a Joint Team comprising representatives of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, Indian Council of Agricultural Research and Ministry of Water Resources has been constituted by the Ministry of Agriculture to identify the extent of problem areas of saline including coastal saline and sandy areas in the country and to recommend package of practices for reclamation of saline areas.

Based on the recommendations of the Joint Team, the proposed scheme of Reclamation of Saline including Coastal Saline and Sandy Areas will be submitted to the Planning Commission for consideration.

Swadeshi Vigyan Mela

1530. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a ""Swadeshi Vigyan Mela" organized by Vigyan Bharati was held in IIT, Delhi with the assistance of various scientific and Government agencies;

(b) whether such melas or chaupals for the benefit of the farmers would be organized on constant basis to acquaint farmers with utilization of modern inputs and technologies in agriculture with the help of Agriculture Universities, Government agencies and NOGs;

(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

(SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) A Swadeshi Vigyan Mela was organized by Vigyan Bharti.

(b) to (d) ICAR has no plans to organize such melas or chaupals for the farmers.

Technology Mission on Black Pepper

1531. SHRI J. CHITHARANJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of a project called "Technology Mission on Black Pepper" prepared by expert committee of the Kerala State Government with a view to improve the productivity and quality of the black pepper in the State;

(b) if so, the details of the project;

(c) whether the State Government has sought any financial assistance for the implementation of the project; and

(d) if so, the details and Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES OF THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Expert Committee constituted by Government of Kerala recommended a package of programmes and activities under four Mini Mission Reports, viz., Research, Production, Storage marketing and quality improvement and Export Promotion. The State Government of Kerala has proposed Technology Mission for Black Pepper for implementation as a state activity with total project cost of Rs. 221.62 crores for 7 years. The Mission envisages to pool available resources and efforts and integrate the activities of all State and Central institutions/agencies located in the State and involved in development of this corp to work towards the objective of improving production and productivity of black pepper.

(c) and (d) The total project cost is to be borne by various participating departments/agencies of Union and State Government. Final decision has not been taken with regard to financial implications of various participating